UNITED NATIONS

UNFCCC Framework Convention on Climate Change

Distr.
GENERAL

FCCC/SBI/2002/5
25 March 2002

Original: ENGLISH

SUBSIDIARY BODY FOR IMPLEMENTATION
Sixteenth session
Bonn, 10 - 14 June 2002
Item 7 of the provisional agenda

MATTERS RELATING TO THE LEAST DEVELOPED COUNTRIES

Meeting of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group

Note by the secretariat

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I. MANDATE

1. The Conference of the Parties at its seventh session, by its decision 29/CP.7, established the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) to advise on the preparation and implementation strategy for national adaptation programmes of action (NAPAs), and in the same decision adopted the terms of reference of the LEG. According to these terms of reference, the LEG is to convene twice each year and is to propose a programme of work for the remainder of its term for consideration by the Subsidiary Body for Implementation at its sixteenth session (SBI 16).

2. The Government of Tanzania hosted the first meeting of the LEG, at Arusha, in the period from 26 to 28 February 2002. Financial support for the organization of the meeting was provided by the Governments of Canada and the Netherlands.

II. SCOPE

3. This document summarizes the discussions that took place at the above-mentioned meeting. Discussions on procedural issues relating to the functions of the LEG are included in section III and discussions on the development of the LEG programme of work are covered in section IV below. The programme of work, as adopted by the group, is included in annex I to this document for consideration by SBI 16 pursuant to paragraph 8 of the terms of reference of the LEG.

4. The composition of the LEG is included in annex II, and the agenda of the meeting is included in annex III to this document.

III. PROCEDURAL MATTERS

A. Election of LEG officers

5. Pursuant to paragraph 5 of the terms of reference of the LEG, the LEG is to elect annually a chairperson, a vice-chairperson and two rapporteurs from amongst its least developed country (LDC) members. The group elected the following officers:

(a) Mr. Bubu Jallow (Gambia) for the position of Chairman;

(b) Mr. Mizanur R. Khan (Bangladesh) for the position of Vice-Chairman;

(c) Ms. Isabelle Niang Diop (Senegal) for the position of Rapporteur;

(d) Mr. Mohamed Ali (Maldives) for the position of Rapporteur.

6. The group discussed the functions of each of the officers and agreed that the functions of the LEG Chairman would include the following:

(a) Facilitating LEG meetings and ensuring that members fulfil their commitments within the specified time frames;

(b) Representing the LEG in the intergovernmental processes related to climate change;

(c) Outreach activities;

(d) Delegating tasks to LEG members.

7. The group agreed that the functions of the LEG Vice-Chairman would be as follows:

(a) Representing the Chairman in his absence;

(b) Conducting fundraising activities on behalf of the Chairman.

8. The group agreed that the functions of the francophone Rapporteur would be as follows:

(a) Liaising with francophone LDC Parties;

(b) Accessing relevant French literature for use by the LEG;

(c) Record-keeping at meetings.

9. The group agreed that the functions of the anglophone Rapporteur would be as follows:

(a) Liaising with anglophone LDC Parties;

(b) Record-keeping at meetings.

B. Provision of guidance and advice on NAPAs

10. The group noted that the terms of reference outlined a number of duties for the LEG in support of NAPA preparation, some of which were to be carried out at the request of LDC Parties and others on the LEG's own initiative.

11. In order to maximize the effectiveness of the support provided by the LEG to the NAPA process, the group emphasized the need for direct communication with LDC Parties through the rapporteurs as appropriate.

12. Discussions on a sample NAPA project proposal supplied to the secretariat by Djibouti proved to be extremely useful in identifying the type of questions of interpretation that might arise in the process of preparation of NAPAs by LDC Parties.

13. The group also noted that much of its mandated work would be conducted intersessionally and, to this end, substantial use of information technology would be needed both for interaction between LEG members as well as for interaction with LDC Parties. In this regard the UNFCCC secretariat will undertake any arrangements needed to facilitate such communications.

C. Engagement of LEG members in NAPA-related work

14. Consistent with paragraph 4 of the LEG terms of reference, the group agreed that its members would not accept any paid assignments relating to the preparation of NAPAs for the duration of their tenure, whether in the form of consultancies or otherwise.

D. Link with the Consultative Group of Experts on National Communications from non-Annex I Parties (CGE)

15. Discussions on this issue reaffirmed the importance of the link between the LEG and the CGE on issues relating to adaptation, as well as the importance of maintaining an exchange of views between the two bodies. It was emphasized that the two LEG members who are also members of the CGE should encourage the flow of relevant information between the two bodies and ensure that documents arising from each group's work are disseminated at meetings of the other group.

16. The terms of reference of the LEG state that the secretariat will organize one LEG meeting in 2002 back-to-back with a CGE meeting, as appropriate and if possible. However, the group realized that given that the CGE meeting to be held later this year will take place immediately before the eighth session of the Conference of the Parties in New Delhi, it may be difficult for some LEG members to stay there for such a prolonged period of time; therefore, it may be sufficient to ensure an exchange of views between the two groups through the common members, in accordance with paragraph 15 above.

E. Use of additional expertise

17. The group discussed the modalities for use of additional expertise as deemed necessary in accordance with paragraph 2 of the terms of reference of the LEG. It was agreed that any proposals for inviting additional experts to LEG meetings would need to be approved by the Chairman of the LEG in consultation with its members. Additional expertise would need to be used judiciously, with clear terms of reference and on an ad-hoc basis.

F. Financial resources

18. Consistent with paragraph A. 7 above on the role of the Vice-Chairman, the LEG agreed that one of its goals should be to encourage contributions in support of the LDC Fund. Attempts should also be made to secure any additional financial resources which may be needed for the effective implementation of the activities of the LEG.

IV. PROGRAMME OF WORK

A. Activities and time frames

19. The group discussed its mandated responsibilities, as included in paragraph 9 of the LEG terms of reference, and agreed on time frames for their implementation. In addition, the group also identified a number of additional activities, described under paragraphs 20 to 27 below, which would be performed in support of fulfilling its mandates. Both clusters of activities were integrated into a programme of work which also includes their time frames up till the ninth session of the Conference of the Parties (COP 9). The group adopted the programme of work, as set out in annex I to this document, for consideration by SBI 16.

B. Outreach

20. The need to undertake outreach activities was underlined, whereby LEG members participating in multilateral events relevant to issues being addressed by the LEG, including in the context of other multilateral environmental agreements, would strive to inform such meetings about LDC priorities in the context of climate change and NAPAs.

21. In this regard, the group also highlighted the importance of the participation of the LEG Chairman at upcoming meetings relating to the World Summit on Sustainable Development, the African Ministerial Conference on the Environment and the Council of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), to the extent possible, with the objective of enhancing awareness of the specific needs and special situations of the least developed countries, particularly in the context of their urgent and immediate needs relating to adaptation to the adverse effects of climate change.

22. The group further underlined the need to maintain close contact with agencies engaged in adaptation-related activities, in particular with those which may have a potential role in the development of NAPAs, such as GEF, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), in order to ensure consistency, complementarity and coherence of activities in support of LDC NAPAs, and requested the secretariat to make relevant arrangements in this

regard. In this context the LEG also noted the need to be informed of NAPA proposals for funding presented by LDC Parties to the GEF.

C. Information package

23. In anticipation of the need to provide guidance and advice to LDC Parties, upon request, on the preparation and implementation strategy of NAPAs, the group agreed to develop background documentation on NAPAs, both for LDC Parties interested in preparing NAPAs, as well as for external entities that may be directly or indirectly involved in the NAPA process. This includes the preparation of annotated NAPA guidelines and a background text on the concept of NAPAs.

24. It was also agreed that the annotated guidelines should be disseminated to LDC Parties through a workshop (or regional workshops) which would involve the main stakeholders involved in the NAPA process in these countries.

25. In support of the effective dissemination of relevant information to LDC Parties, the UNFCCC secretariat was requested to develop a web page for LDCs, which would include relevant information on NAPAs, as well as links to external sites providing data and information that would be useful in the preparation of NAPAs.

D. Simulated NAPAs

26. The group agreed to develop two simulated NAPAs, one for a land-locked LDC and another for a coastal LDC, which would help the LEG to acquire first-hand experience in the use of the NAPA guidelines and to identify any problems with their interpretation. This would enable the LEG to provide more effective advice, as needed, as well as to formulate proposals for the review and, if necessary, revision of the guidelines at COP 8.

E. Progress on the preparation of selected NAPAs

27. The group agreed to monitor progress on NAPA preparation in the first few countries to initiate work on NAPAs, so as to further identify problems relating to the implementation of the NAPA guidelines, as well as to discern best practices in the initial phase of the NAPA preparation process.

Annex I

Programme of work of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group

Activity	Time frame
Providing advice on the preparation and implementation strategy of NAPAs, including the identification of data sources, upon request	Ongoing
Facilitating information exchange	Ongoing
Developing recommendations on the promotion of regional synergies	Ongoing
Developing recommendations on the promotion of synergies with other multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs)	Ongoing
Developing recommendations on mainstreaming NAPAs into regular development planning in the context of national strategies for sustainable development	Ongoing
Outreach activities	Ongoing
Completing first draft of annotated NAPA guidelines	By end of March 2002
Identifying sources of information to support NAPA preparation, and providing this information to the secretariat for inclusion in the secretariat's upcoming LDC web page	By end of May 2002
Preparing supporting literature on NAPAs for dissemination	By end of May 2002
Producing two case studies of simulated NAPAs, in preparation for the provision, by the LEG, of technical guidance and advice to LDC Parties upon request	By end of May 2002
Organizing a LEG meeting to discuss case studies and finalize annotated NAPA guidelines, in support of advising on mainstreaming NAPAs into regular development planning and in promoting synergies, to be disseminated to LDC Parties	June 2002
Providing input to the review, or revision, of the NAPA guidelines at COP 8	By end of July 2002
Following progress on preparation of the first NAPAs to be developed, in support of facilitating the exchange of information to disseminate best practices in NAPA development	By end of September 2002
Providing recommendations on capacity building needs for NAPA preparation, taking into account the Capacity Development Initiative of the GEF and other relevant capacity building initiatives, as appropriate	By end of September 2002
Providing recommendations on capacity building needs for NAPA implementation, taking into account the Capacity Development Initiative of the GEF and other relevant capacity building initiatives, as appropriate	By end of September 2003
Organizing a workshop, with the participation of LDC stakeholders, to exchange views on the process of preparation of NAPAs	To be decided

Annex II

Composition of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group

The members of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group, as at 26 February 2002, were as follows:

Mr. Mohamed ALI	(Maldives)
Mr. Lubinda AONGOLA	(Zambia)
Mr. Philip BAKER	(Canada)
Mr. Henk BOSCH*	(Netherlands)
Mr. Paul DESANKER	(Malawi)
Mr. Tim FOY	(United Kingdom)
Mr. Bubu JALLOW	(Gambia)
Mr. Mizanur R. KHAN	(Bangladesh)
Mr. Johnson NAVITI†	(Vanuatu)
Ms. Isabelle NIANG DIOP*	(Senegal)
Mr. Abebe TADEGE	(Ethiopia)
Ms. Dechen TSERING	(Bhutan)

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* Also a member of the CGE.
† Replaced by Mr. Laavasa Malua (Samoa) on 20 March 2002.

Annex III

Agenda of the meeting

First meeting of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group

Mt. Meru Hotel; Arusha, Tanzania
26-28 February 2002

Day 1; 26 February 2002

- Registration

Session 1:
- Introduction and opening of the meeting
- Mama Konaté, Chairman of the group of LDCs in the climate change process
- Janos Pasztor, Coordinator, Sustainable Development programme, UNFCCC secretariat
- Adoption of the agenda
- Introduction of participants

Session 2:
- Election of officers and discussion on their functions

Session 3:
- Background on NAPAs and the role of the LDC Expert Group (Youssef Nassef, UNFCCC secretariat)
- Follow-up discussion

Session 4:
- Case study: NAPA proposal by Djibouti

Day 2; 27 February 2002

Session 1:
- Procedural issues related to the functioning of the LEG

Session 2:
- Discussion on elements of the LEG work programme for 2002-2003

Day 3; 28 February 2002

Session 1:
- Discussion on workshop outcomes and on follow-up action
- Plans for intersessional work

Session 2
- Conclusions

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